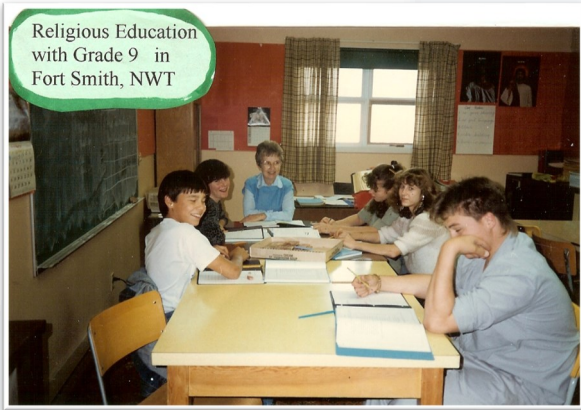


Sister Kathleen Haley, SSND - 70 Year Jubilee!



When my formal teaching days ended in Ontario, I was assigned to teach Catechism to our children in the public schools in the Northwest Territories. This was certainly a challenge for Sister Rosalie Reitzel and myself, who were assigned to this ministry. Our cautious approach was to continue the program as it had been administered. At the end of the first year which left us frustrated with a feeling of being on the outside, we met with our parish board to evaluate and to present an alternate approach.

After meeting the criteria set by the parish board, we were free to start a pilot project. Our main objective the first year of this project was to involve the parents. An explanatory letter sent to parents invited them to choose an evening of the week which they and their children involved would attend. This worked out quite well as some evenings we had eight families, others six and so on. There was always room for more to join if they became motivated.

We started with a Gospel ritual, which involved the children and adults. Then we divided into groups according to grade with our parish priest taking the adults. We followed the catechesis of the Sunday Gospel for each level. When instructions were over, we gathered again as one group; the children were encouraged to share their new learnings with their parents. This sharing along with goodies and drinks ended our evening.

As all the problems were gradually being ironed out, we noticed a new spirit of quiet excitement. The children were happy to come with their parents and the parents were beginning to feel that they were needed. In addition, the parents were being catechized and coming to realize their place as the first teachers for their children. Special events held during the year were very well attended. We could not have been more pleased with the result and at the end of the year, we knew that this method was the way forward.

Sister Kathleen Haley was born in Osprey Twp, Grey County, Ontario on Dec. 12, 1931. She is one of four daughters and nine sons born to Catherine Burns and John Haley from Ontario. She professed first vows in Waterdown, Ontario in 1950. Over seven decades, Sister Kathleen ministered across Ontario and the Northern Territories as a teacher for 20 years, another 13 years as a teacher of religious education, 13 years in Catechetical Correspondence at the motherhouse and the Diocese of Hamilton, five more years at the diocese marriage tribunal, six years in community service and seven years in local leadership. She now ministers in prayer and presence at Notre Dame Convent.

